

Message Text

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AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 077893

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, TU, CY

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN SOLARZ

REF: (A) ANKARA 2226, (B) STATE 75594

1. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ HAS ALREADY DEPARTED FOR AFRICA AND THIS FACT, COMBINED WITH THE LONGSTANDING USG POSITION ON THE ILLEGALITY OF THE TURKISH/CYPRIOT AIRPORT, HAS LED US TO DECIDE AGAINST ASKING THE CONGRESSMAN OR HIS OFFICE TO FOREGO THEIR CURRENT ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A US MILITARY FLIGHT FROM LARNACA TO ANKARA. WE HAVE NOT ENCOURAGED, NOR DO WE THINK WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE, ANY USE BY US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OF FLIGHTS TO OR FROM ERCAN.

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2. DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS IT DESIRABLE THAT CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ BE ABLE TO CARRY THROUGH WITH HIS PLAN TO VISIT GREECE, CYPRUS, AND TURKEY SO THAT HE WILL HAVE BALANCED AND UP-TO-DATE PERSPECTIVE FOR UPCOMING HIRC CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE REGION. GIVEN THE CONGRESSMAN'S TIGHT SCHEDULE, WE RECOGNIZE THAT HE CANNOT FOLLOW AN ITINERARY THAT WILL BE FULLY SATISFACTORY TO ALL PARTIES

CONCERNED. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE CURRENT ROUTING INVOLVING US MILITARY PLANE ON CYPRUS-TURKEY FLIGHT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THE LARGER INTEREST OF A FULL AND PRODUCTIVE

SOLARZ VISIT TO ALL THESE COUNTRIES--A RESULT WHICH WE BELIEVE WOULD ALSO SERVE OUR INTEREST.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE TURKS MAY FEEL DISAPPOINTED IF SOLARZ ALSO DOES NOT USE ERCAN WHICH HE TOLD AMBASSADOR ESENBEL HE MIGHT USE WHEN HE FIRST LOOKED HIMSELF AT AIRLINE SCHEDULES AND REALIZED THIS WOULD BE ONLY WAY COMMERCIALY TO VISIT ALL THREE COUNTRIES IN 2-1/2 DAYS. HOWEVER, THE GOC IS AWARE THAT IT IS LONGSTANDING US POLICY TO AVOID ERCAN, AND TO TAKE OFFENSE SIMPLY AT CONTINUATION OF THIS POLICY WOULD STRIKE US AS A CLEAR OVERREACTION. MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE HOPE THE TURKS WOULD NOT SO FOCUS ON WHAT WOULD SEEM RELATIVELY MINOR MATTER AS TO LOSE SIGHT OF LARGER INTERESTS WHICH MIGHT BE SERVED THROUGH THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH SOLARZ.

4. A LARNACA-ANKARA ROUTING BY MILITARY AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT, OF COURSE, BE WITHOUT SOME COST TO THE GOC, WHICH MAY ITSELF BE RELUCTANT TO GRANT CLEARANCE. WE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO BE FORTHCOMING ON THIS POINT IN EXCHANGE FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH AN IMPORTANT HIRC MEMBER.

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5. WITH REGARD TO CONCERN EXPRESSED IN PARA 5, REFTEL, WE FULLY AGREE THAT AIR FORCE WILL NEED TO LOOK CLOSELY AT FLIGHT PATHS IF AND WHEN FLIGHT IS APPROVED. AT FIRST GLANCE, HOWEVER, IT WOULD SEEM TO US THAT AN AIRCRAFT TAKING OFF ACROSS LARNACA BAY COULD EASILY LOOP AROUND THE KARPAS PENINSULA AND THUS AVOID ANY OVERFLIGHT PROBLEM. SOMETHING LIKE THAT WAS AGREED TO FOR CLIFFORD MISSION IN FEBRUARY 1977. VANCE

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